

Facilitation Overview

Neighborhood Leadership Summit

Boulder, Colorado


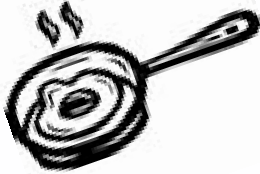


Facilitation Defined

- To make easy
- To move forward
- To enable the group to:
 - Fully contribute
 - Experience commitment to teams and decisions



Distinguishing Content from Process

Effective meeting participants distinguish the content of a meeting from the meeting process. By remembering this distinction, you can help keep a meeting on track.

Content	Process
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	
	

Are most problems with meetings content or process related?

Structure and Flow



Flow

- **Flow** is a mental and emotional state of operation in which the team is fully immersed in what they are doing, characterized by a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success in the process of the activity.

Elements of Structure: POP

- POP stands for:

- **Purpose**

What is the purpose of our being together?

- **Outcomes**

What are the specific outcomes we want from our meeting?

- **Process**

What is the process we'll use to accomplish our outcomes?

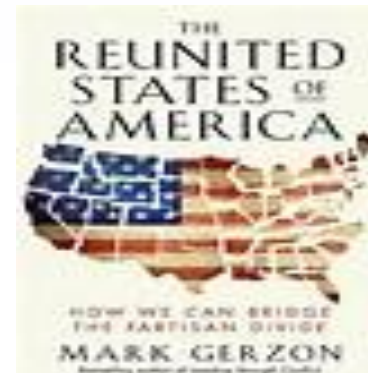
The POP Model was created by Leslie Sholl Jaffe and Randy Alford

Opening a Meeting/Session

- Welcoming and Context
- Clarify the Purpose and Outcomes
- Clarify the Roles of the Meeting
 - Facilitator, Recorder (Scribe) etc....
- Review the Agenda
- Help people get connected/present with each other
- Groundrules/Guidelines

Groundrules/Guidelines

- One of the fundamental rules of facilitation is you're only as strong and as solid as the ground rules that you're standing on. If you don't have ground rules, you're standing on quicksand.
 - Mark Gerzon, author of Bridging the Partisan Divide



Sample Groundrules/Guidelines

Bi-Partisan Congressional Groundrules: to create a safe space for open conversation

■ Respect

- To show consideration for; avoid violation of, treat with deference. No personal attacks.

■ Fairness

- Equal time for speakers; speak briefly.

■ Listening

- When others speak, listen – don't prepare your remarks. Listen with intent to understand/

■ Openness

- To other points of view, to outcome

Other Sample Groundrules

- Everyone Participate
- No One Dominates - Respect
- Ask Questions: Be curious
- Listen to understand before agree/disagree
- Focus on the ideas not the person
- Honor Time Commitments
- Cell phones on vibrate

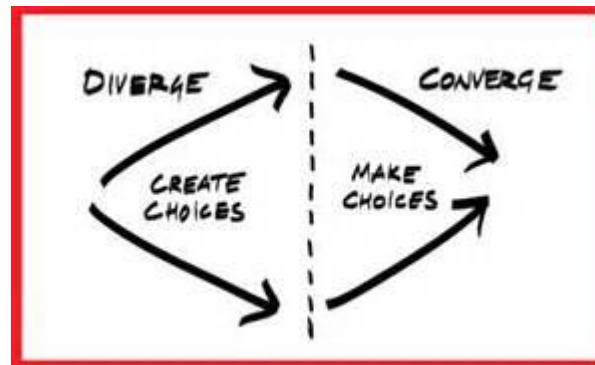
A Facilitation Master Strategy

... from ...

... to ...

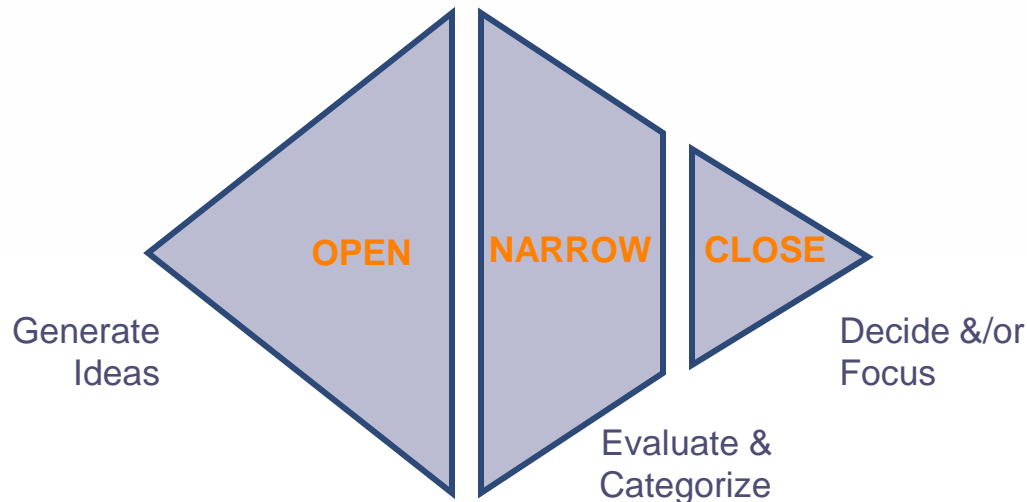
Divergent
Thinking

Convergent
Thinking



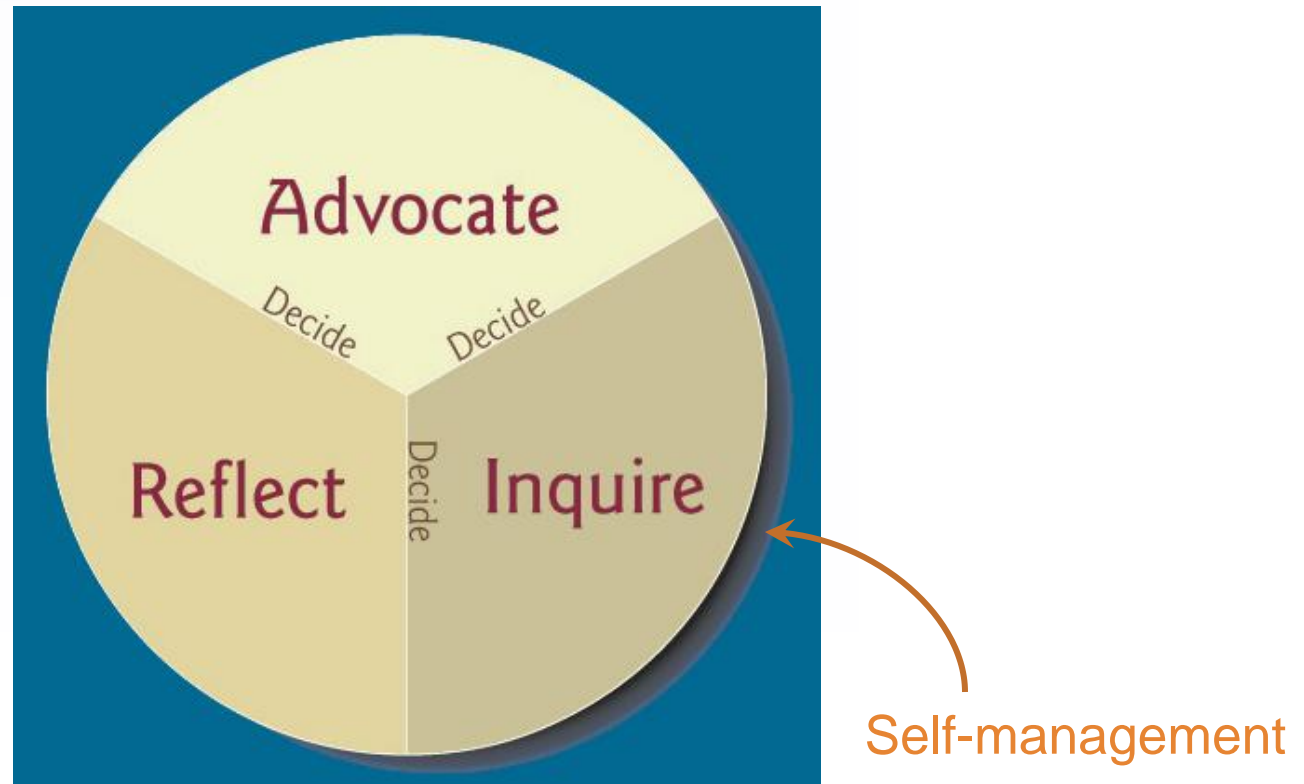
Stages of Group Discussions

In a team project session or any idea-generation meeting, people engage in three mental processes, divergent thinking (open), evaluative thinking (narrow) and convergent thinking (close). Facilitators assist groups by facilitating agreements in each phase and helping participants focus on the same thought process at the same time.



Adapted from Straus, David *"How to Make Collaboration Work"*, 2002.

Communication Skills



Core Skills: Unskillful Inquiry

- Leading Questions
 - Don't you think...?"
 - Is that what really...?"
 - Didn't you say....?"
- Contains Advice
 - Did you try...?
 - Have you thought about...?
 - Why don't you..."
- Pulls speaker off focus by filling questioner's "need to know"



Core Skills: Skillful Inquiry

- Originates from an open mind and genuine curiosity
- Allows speakers to reveal what is most important to them
- Invites speakers to do their own thinking
- Encourages speakers to self-evaluate their own data



Skillful Inquiry

- Help me understand how you see things.
- Why is this important to you? What are your key interests and concerns?
- What do you need here?
- What are your priorities?
- What experiences have you had that inform your perspective?
- What am I missing?

Core Skills: Unskillful Advocacy

- Speaking from Noble Certainties
 - “This is the way it is”
 - “I’m right about this”
 - Of course, we do it this way
- Telling (Being Directive)
 - What to think
 - What to do
 - What their problem is
- No Curiosity
- Having to have the Last Word



External Skills: Skillful Advocacy

- Explaining the reasoning behind suggestions
- Give data when helpful
- Include your feelings and experiences when appropriate



Skillful Advocacy: Advocacy Guidelines

- Here is what is most important to me...
- Let me share with you my concerns and my thinking behind it.
- This is my working assumption about that situation.
- Here are the pressures I am responding to...
- Let me share the professional experiences I have had that shape my understanding...
- Here is what I am seeing. Here is how I am understanding this situation and here is my conclusion. How do you see it differently and why?

External Skills: Reflective Listening

- Listening is a skill
- To demonstrate that you understand feelings and thoughts
- From the other person's point of view

External Skills: Reflective Listening

How to reflect:

- Take it in
- Sort it out
- Sum it up
- Say it back
 - *in your own words*
 - *briefly with empathy*
 - *go for meaning, not the words*
 - *consider what the person is feeling*
 - *“you” focus*

External Skills: Reflective Listening

Listening for Meaning

- Starter phrases for what people are **thinking**
 - You're wondering whether...
 - Your dilemma is whether to... or to...
 - Your point of view is...
 - You're thinking that...
- Starter phrases for what people are **feeling**
 - You sound...
 - You feel...
 - You look...

External Skills: Reflective Listening

Getting the “Yes”

- Originates from an open mind and genuine curiosity
- “Yes” signals you have heard the speaker fully and correctly
- “Yes” counts if no new content follows
- “Yes” can be also
 - “No”
 - “Right”
 - nonverbal head shake
- After “Yes,” Skill User decided where to go next in the Communication Cycle

